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Housekeepers' Chat

Tuesday, October 8, 1929.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "How to Launder Silk and Rayon." From Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Methods and Equipment for Home Laundering."

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"It won't be long now," sighed my Next-Door-Neighbor.

"Long till what?" I asked.

"Till Christmas. There was a salesman around this morning, trying to sell me Christmas cards. Imagine that--selling Christmas cards before Thanksgiving! 'The time is out of joint'--or something. Before long they'll be selling firecrackers in December--and valentines in May. But look here, Aunt Sammy, at the beautiful silk and rayon underwear I bought. 'Underthings,' the saleswoman called them. Here's a dainty shell-pink--and a delicate shade of peach--this one's orchid--and how do you like this pajama set, in Nile green?"

"Very pretty. What are you going to do with all this fine underwear?"

"Oh, send it to my nieces, who are in college. They never have enough, it seems--and it will make fine Christmas gifts."

"What!" I exclaimed. "Buying Christmas gifts in October?"

"Might as well," said my Neighbor. "If you had as many nieces and nephews as I have, you'd begin shopping in October, too. I've been wondering, Aunt Sammy--is rayon underwear easy to launder?"

"Yes, if you use certain simple precautions. Some types of rayon are weaker when wet than when dry. That's why rayon undergarments are often torn by being hung up with clothespins, or by rough fingernails, or by rings, worn while you're washing the rayon.

"Always use lukewarm water, rather than hot water, which makes rayon tender. It's better to use a soapsuds of pure, neutral soap, than to rub the soap directly on the garment. The garment should not be rubbed, but squeezed and rinsed, repeatedly, until it is clean.

"After it's washed, hang the garment over a line, or in any other suitable place, but under no circumstances use clothespins. Many rayon garment, can be gently pulled into shape, after they are dry, and worn without ironing. If you use an iron, be sure that it is not too hot. Medium heat is best."

"While we're on the subject," said my friend, "what about washing silk?"

"Good quality silk is a durable material, but it can't be handled like ordinary cotton. For silk garments, use only lukewarm water, for both washing and rinsing. Make a good suds of a neutral soap, and wash with as little rubbing as possible. Be careful that the silk does not come in contact with washing powders which bleach, because these powders may rot the material. Ordinary bleaching powder is especially hard on silk materials. Anything more you want to know, today?"

"Not today," said my Neighbor. "Except to tell you that I'm making the most delectable, the most delicious, the most -- well, words fail to describe the Upside-down Apple Cake I'm going to make this afternoon. Served with hard sauce -- shall I save you a piece?"

"Yes indeed -- two pieces -- for when it comes to Upside-down Apple Cake -- "

"I understand," said my friend, as she gathered up her rainbow-hued garments, and left my kitchen.

How would you like to have an Upside-down Apple Cake, for Sunday dinner? I'll suggest it to the Menu Specialist, and I'm sure she will be glad to include it in Friday's menu. Something to look forward to, that is.

Now let's resume our laundry questions. Here's one which will interest all of you: "Dear Aunt Sammy: I wish you would please tell me whether it is always necessary to boil clothes, and please tell me the correct way to rinse them."

White cotton and linen clothes may be boiled, if you want to disinfect them thoroughly, but boiling is not necessary. Under good conditions of washing, and rinsing, and drying, the boiling process may be omitted. Let's not add any unnecessary work, on wash day. If you do boil your cottons and linens, wring them from the wash water, place them in fresh, hot, soapy water, and boil for five or ten minutes. If you boil them longer, they may turn yellow. When you lift the clothes from the boiler, let them drain as much as possible.

Now about the rinsing, Clothes should be rinsed in plenty of hot, clear, soft water. Never put bluing in the first rinse water. All soap and washing powders should be removed from the clothes, before they are put into the bluing water. It is important that clothes be well rinsed, because soap and washing powders will weaken and yellow them, if allowed to remain on them indefinitely.

The other day a radio friend wrote for information about choosing a washing machine. Since that is too long a subject to discuss by radio, I am sending this listener a copy of a bulletin published by the Bureau of Home Economics. The bulletin is called "Methods and Equipment for Home Laundering." It gives excellent suggestions for equipping a home laundry, and doing a family washing and ironing. It tells how to wash curtains, and sweaters, and pillows, too.

The next question is from a housekeeper who wants advice on curtaining her kitchen windows.

If the windows are small-paned, and the view is pleasing, you might omit curtains entirely! However, a softer effect is gained by using side curtains--of gingham, glass toweling, muslin, or some other durable, easily laundered material. A short ruffle, which does not interfere with ventilation, is all the valance you need.

If you must cover your windows with glass curtains, use a thinner material, band it with a bright color, and omit the side curtains. Kitchen windows may be made one of the beauty spots of the room, although they are often just the opposite. Window sills full of empty milk bottles are not attractive, even with pretty curtains.

Last question: "Can scorch stains be removed from linen and cotton fabrics?"

Scorch stains on cotton and linen can sometimes be removed, if the fibers are not actually burned. For removing slight stains, use one of these methods:

First, soap and water, if the fabric is washable and the stain is slight.

Second, wet the spot with water (or soap and water), and expose it to the sun for a day, or longer if necessary. The scorch disappears more rapidly if the material is moistened before exposure.

Third, use hydrogen peroxide. Light scorch stains can be removed from any white fabric as follows: Dampen a white cotton cloth with hydrogen peroxide and place over the stain. Place a clean, dry cloth over this to protect the iron, and then iron with a medium warm iron. Replace the top cloth if the hydrogen peroxide soaks through. Repeat the operation if necessary. If you use this method, you must observe this precaution--never iron directly on the cloth moistened with the hydrogen peroxide, or on the moist fabric after the dry cloth has been removed. If you do, the iron will leave a rust stain on the garment and you'll have to begin all over again.

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Wednesday: "How Does Your Child Sleep?" Program will also include menu.

